



File Code: 2210

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Robert & Rochelle Oxarango
Oxarango Lamb & Wool
P.O. Box 77
Rupert, ID 83350

**CERTIFIED MAIL –
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED
NUMBER:**

Dear Robert & Rochelle;

Enclosed are your Annual Operating Instructions (AOI) for the **Black Canyon, Hell Creek/ Comb Creek, Fossil Canyon & South Sulphur, Squaw Creek, and Wolverine-Kirk Sheep Allotments**. These operating instructions are a guide for management on these allotments during the 2011 grazing season. We have also included your Actual Use Form, which should be completed and returned with the folder to the Soda Springs Ranger District by **November 30, 2011**.

If you intend to take any non-use, it must be approved prior to the grazing season. As a reminder, you must own the livestock you place on the allotment. Leasing of livestock is a violation of your term grazing permit and will result in the cancellation of your permit.

Grazing Schedule

The 2011 order of rotation is outlined in this section. The entry date onto your allotment may be adjusted dependant on range readiness. If a change is necessary you will be notified. **Please contact us 5 days prior to when your sheep will enter the Forest.**

Allotment	Season of Use	Permitted No.	Actual No.	Unit Rotation
Black Canyon	6/25-9/10	1100	1000	Clockwise
Hell Cr./Comb Cr.	6/26-8/31	1000	900	Counter-Clockwise
S. Sulphur	5/20-9/15	800	Non-use	Counter- Clockwise
Fossil	5/20-9/15	1250	1125	Counter-Clockwise
Squaw Creek	6/26-8/31	1000	900	Counter-Clockwise
Wolverine-Kirk	6/25-9/10	1250	1125	Counter-Clockwise

The schedule outlined above is only an estimate. If riparian or upland monitoring shows that an area is being overused, even if there is adequate vegetation in surrounding upland or riparian areas, livestock will need to be moved. The Forest Service officer in charge of your allotment must approve any extension to the grazing season. **It is your responsibility to see that this grazing schedule is followed. Approval must be obtained before changes to the grazing schedule occur.**



Grazing Management Standards and Guides

In 2003 the Revised Forest Plan(RFP) for the Caribou National Forest was signed. As a result of the *2003 Caribou RFP*,); the following grazing management standards for upland areas are now in effect for all your allotments. Your livestock must be removed from a pasture (unit) when the grazing management standards and guides are reached in either the uplands or the riparian areas. The grazing management standards and guides will apply to, both native and desirable non-native, key species. Site specific standards will be identified in the Allotment Management Plan (AMP) and AOI.

The following grazing standards and guides will be used as a guide in grazing your allotments. When these standards are followed ecological conditions should progress toward the Desired Future Conditions described in Chapter 3, *2003 Caribou RFP*.

A. Upland Grazing Standards and Guides

Upland grazing standards and guides are based on the community type and whether or not they fall under critical winter range, winter range or non-winter range. Community Types and their relevance to winter range were mapped in the *Caribou RFP*. Site specific standards and guides for the uplands on the allotment will be addressed in the AOI and Allotment Management Plan (AMP). When establishing the standards and guides for the uplands on the allotment will follow directions set forth in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Upland Forage Utilization Standards and Guides

Allowed Upland Forage utilization	Type of Upland Area		
	Critical Winter Range	Winter Range	Non Winter Range
Grasses and herbaceous Species* (% dry weight)	35	45	55
Shrubs* (Annual leader growth)	10	20	35

* Key species that would be monitored are Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Elytrigia (Agropyron) spicata*), mountain brome (*Bromus carinatus*) or key shrub species such as sagebrush (*Artemisia* spp.), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), or serviceberry (*Amelanchier* spp.)

Riparian Grazing Standards and Guidelines South (Sulpher and Fossil Allotments)

The south Sulpher and Fossil Canyon Allotment Riparian grazing standards are covered under the *2003 Revised Forest Plan*. Table 2 below, shall be used for riparian grazing until more site-specific standards are implemented on the allotment using the most current Caribou Riparian Grazing Implementation Guide.

Table 2 Riparian Grazing Standards

Parameter	Location Measured	Condition of Riparian (Lotic) Area		
		Properly Functionin g Condition	Functioning at Risk	Non-Functioning
% Herbaceous Species Utilization*	Greenline	45%	35%	30%
	In AIZ	55%	45%	35%
% Woody Spp Utilization	-	45%	40%	30%
Stubble Height*	Greenline	4 inches	6 inches	6 inches
%Bank Disturbance	Cumulative	30%	25%	20%

* Residual stubble height are intended for riparian dependent species only such as Nebraska sedge. Percent utilization criteria are intended for use on non-riparian dependent species such as Kentucky bluegrass and red-top.

Site specific monitoring of each stream will be used to determine when proper use has been reached. Once the allowable use standard is met, regardless of numbers of animals or time, livestock will be moved. Timing and intensity of use are the key elements of implementing the riparian grazing standards and guides.

Utilization will be based on stubble height or a percent of total weight grazed on key forage species. Monitoring could include using utilization cages, utilization scales/gauges, ocular estimates or a combination of these three.

North End

In September of 2003 the *North End Sheep Allotment Management Plan (AMP) Revision Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)* was signed. The AMP determined the standards and guides for the **Wolverine/Kirk, Comb/Hell Creek, Squaw Creek and Black Canyon**. The standards and guides in the AMP are similar to those listed above from the RFP, however the following adjustments were made to riparian areas. Three measurements are commonly used to monitor livestock grazing impacts in riparian areas. They include stubble height, woody utilization, and key species utilization. Allowable disturbance levels will be tailored to each stream depending on whether the stream is 'Functioning', 'Functioning-at-Risk', or 'Non-functioning'. Parameters are measured in key areas along the riparian habitat. The following list (table 3) describes the parameters, where the measurements occur, and how they will be analyzed:

North End Riparian Standards (Lotic) area (Table 3)			
	Functioning	Functioning-at-Risk	Non-Functioning
% Herbaceous Utilization	20-55	20-45	20-40
Stubble height	2-6 inches	3-8 inches	4-8 inches
% Bank Disturbance	25-35	20-30	15-25
% Woody Species Utilization	35-50	30-50	15-50
% Ground Cover	80	80-90	85-95

The ranges of values shown above are based on time of use (early, mid, late) and how the stream rated out after conducting Proper Functioning Condition ratings. * Residual stubble height are intended for riparian dependent species only such as Nebraska sedge. Percent utilization criteria are intended for use on non-riparian dependent species such as Kentucky bluegrass and red-top.

The Following List states the PFC rating for the streams within your North End Allotments. Use the PFC ratings listed below (table 4), with the standards in (table 3), to ensure that proper use is not exceeded.

Proper Functioning Condition Rating for Streams in North End (Table 4)	
Stream	Type of Riparian (Lotic) Area
Wolverine Cr.	Functioning
Kirk Cr.	Functioning
Fish Cr.	Functioning-at-Risk
Hell Cr.	Functioning
Comb Cr.	Functioning-at-Risk
Black Cyn. Cr.	Functioning
Skull Cr.	Functioning
Trail Cr.	Functioning-at-Risk
Taylor Cr.	Functioning
Squaw Cr.	Functioning
Jackknife Cr.	Functioning-at-Risk
S. Sulphur Cr.	Functioning-at-Risk

Winter range standards in the *North End AMP* are the same as those covered in the *Revised forest Plan*.

Special Instructions

This year all AOI's will be posted on the internet. In conjunction with this action all permittees must sign the AOI showing that they have read it and accepted the terms, conditions, and management practices presented in it.

Reforestation plantations are located on the South Sulphur Allotment and on the Fossil Canyon Allotment (the Upper Dry Canyon Timber Sale). **No grazing or bedding of your sheep is allowed in the closed plantations (Until trees are greater than four feet tall).** A Forest Service employee will be monitoring the plantations. If plantations seedlings are damaged in the closed plantations because of your sheep management, you could be responsible financially to replant these areas and additional permit action may occur. Within the open reforestation plantation, no salting or bedding is allowed and once-over-light grazing is allowed. A tentative field trip is scheduled for mid may with a member of the timber crew to go look at the plantation area.

Wolf Recovery Management:

As stated on the Idaho Fish and Game Website 2/17/11
(<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/wolves/current.cfm>)

Current Legal Status

August 5, 2010, wolf management south of Interstate 90 reverted to a section of the Endangered Species Act known as the 10(j) rule.

Simply put, the 10(j) rule allows states and tribes with approved wolf management plans some options to manage wolves to ensure the health of wild elk and deer herds. It also provides more flexibility to protect livestock and private property. The rule allows individuals on private or public land to kill a wolf that is in the act of attacking their stock animals (horses, mules, donkey, llamas, goats used to transport people and possessions) or dogs provided there is no evidence of intentional baiting, feeding or deliberate attractants of wolves. On land north of Interstate 90 in Idaho, or land administered by the National Park Service, wolves may be killed only to protect human life.

District Trailing Guidelines

- When trailing, sheep must use Forest Service system roads where feasible.
- Trailing while on National Forest System land will be counted as part of a permittee's permitted days.
- Sheep should cover a minimum of 6 miles a day when trailing to or from the permitted allotment.
- Do not overnight sheep in the same location where an earlier band of sheep bedded.
- While trailing to and from your allotments, make every effort to cross other sheep and cattle allotments as quickly as possible.

McCoy Creek Roadway

- a. **A maximum of three nights after entering the Forest should be used while trailing to and from your Hell Creek/Comb Creek and Squaw Creek allotments. Sheep must be on specified Allotments 3 days after entering the Forest, (near Della Basin).**
- b. A maximum of one night while on Forest should be taken while trailing the band to and from the Wolverine-Kirk allotment.

For the Henry Cut-off Roadway:

- a. Before the sheep can bed overnight on the Henry Cut-off or Bridge Creek Cattle Allotment, Forest Service approval is needed and it will count against your permitted days.
- b. If nooning or overnighting on Forest, no bedding of the sheep in the vicinity of the troughs, the switchback troughs, the summit, or north of the summit.
- c. While trailing across the Bridge Creek Cattle Allotment, the sheep need to stay south of the highway on the designated trail. Near the substation, the trail will return to the highway.

For the Jackknife Driveway:

- a. A maximum of three nights, while on Forest, is needed when trailing to the Black Canyon Allotment.
- b. Sheep must stay on designated driveway.
- c. Sheep trailing is limited to two days (one night), while trailing across the Jackknife Driveway.
- d. The Jackknife Trial and stream enhancement project is in the planning phase. Ideas are being presented by different specialist groups, and public response is being considered. This project will effect your Black Canyon Allotment, and we will keep you informed as the need arises.

Permittee Responsibilities

- 1. "Once-over" grazing and open herding is to be practiced on all allotments.
- 2. Sheep are to bed in new locations each night. Sheep should be encouraged to bed in places other than ridges.
- 3. Sheep should not be allowed to bed near streams, ponds, springs, or Forest System roads and trails. Noon bedding in riparian areas is not allowed. Sheep should be encouraged to water early in the day and then moved off water.
- 4. Ensure the herder leaves a sanitary and clean campsite.

5. Salt should be placed in areas away from water, riparian areas, forest plantations, ridges, shade-up areas, Forest System roads and trails, and bed grounds. Salt in a different location each year and remove bags after use.
6. While trailing to and from your allotments, sheep will be kept on established roadways or the Jackknife driveway.
7. Report all fires to the District Office as soon as possible (208) 547-4356.
8. Any hay or straw brought on the Forest must be certified, "Weed free". If you are found to be using uncertified hay or straw, a violation notice and/or permit action may be taken.
9. All improvements listed in part 3 of your permit must meet Forest Service Standards. A copy has been attached to this AOI for your convenience. A delay in livestock turnout on your allotments will result if improvements do not meet acceptable standards prior to the grazing season. If they are not up to standard, and your livestock are on the allotment, administrative action may be taken against your permit. Maintenance work should be completed prior to livestock entering the allotment and to the standards listed below:

Water Development Maintenance Standards

Springboxes

- Sediment and foreign objects need to be removed from headboxes.
- Damaged headbox covers need to be repaired or replaced.
- Repair any damaged fence around springs.
- A galvanized screen must be kept on the intake pipe in the headbox. Replace and repair screens as needed.
- Water should be kept in the trough throughout the grazing season.

Pipelines and Troughs

- Cracked or broken pipelines need to be replaced. Clean plugged pipelines.
- Drain pipes must be kept open, operating, and able to drain overflow at least 20 feet away from trough.
- Clean sediment from troughs. Repair and clean overflows and float valves. Level troughs and reset when needed. Replace broken trough braces.
- Level troughs and reset when needed.
- Wildlife escape ramps should be installed on all troughs.

Stock Ponds and Reservoirs

- Clean stockwater ponds and spillways of debris, dead animals, etc.
- When siltation builds to one half the capacity of the pond, it must be cleaned.

Forms to be Completed

Please read and follow the general instructions in your folder, **complete the Actual Use Form and return this folder to us by November 30, 2011.** Read the instructions on Part 2 of your Term Grazing Permit.

Compliance

This AOI is made part of your grazing permit consistent with part 1, Item 3, and Part 2, Item 8 (a). Situations may develop during which requires changes to these instructions. If this becomes necessary, or if you cannot comply with some of these instructions, contact the District Ranger and obtain approval before initiating changes or deviating from these instructions.

If you have questions or concerns during the grazing season, feel free to call me or any of the range staff on the zone. Our phone numbers are as follows.

	Office	Cell
Jack Isaacs District Ranger	208) 547-4356	
Kevin Parker Supervisory Range Specialist	208) 547-4356	
Dell Transtrum Range Specialist	208)547-1106 208)547-4356	208) 313- 7906

Sincerely,

/S/ JACK ISAACS

JACK L. ISAACS
District Ranger

Annual Operating Instructions Soda Springs Ranger District

**Black Canyon, Hell Creek/ Comb Creek, Fossil Canyon & South Sulphur,
Squaw Creek, and Wolverine-Kirk Sheep Allotments.
2011**



Accepted By:

/S/ Robert Oxarango
Robert Oxarango

5/19/11
Date

Approved By:

/S/ Jack Isaacs
Jack L Isaacs
District Ranger

5/19/11
Date